

## CORRESPONDENCE

re-establish a Christian philosophy, not because it is Christian, but because it is true. And more especially is it important to establish metaphysics as a living science. I know that considerable work is being done, particularly at Louvain and by outstanding individuals like M. Maritain, for which one is grateful, but all existing efforts should be intensified and further efforts should be made, particularly in disseminating the principles of Thomism by public lectures and so forth. Perhaps I suggest this because I had the good fortune to attend a series of lectures given under the auspices of the Dominican Order in Manchester in 1924 whereby my whole intellectual outlook was changed. And I have no doubt that many others will have derived immense benefit from that admirable series of lectures. I do not doubt that the Dominican Order has the intellectual aspect of our present problems fully in view, but I am impelled to write this because I feel that in discussing the question of peace the intellectual aspect of the problem is insufficiently stressed. Some people feel that it is not so much that we have to fight Beelzebub, but it is the spectre of Descartes that must be laid in order to make the world fit for reasonable men to live in.

I do not wish in any way to detract from the value of the matter published in your December issue; it is wholly admirable; and I for one am grateful for the light it throws on the problem of peace from the standpoint of Christian morality.

Yours faithfully,

N. S. HUBBARD.

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## REVIEWS

### THEOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY

**THE MYSTICAL CHRIST.** By Rev. John C. Gruden. (Herder, London; 12/6.)

On the doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ the theologians of the Vatican Council pronounced as follows: "This is that pre-eminent aspect of the Church, whose head is Christ, which can never be sufficiently insisted on and commended so that it may be kept before the minds of the faithful and become permanently and deeply fixed therein." If there were no other reason, therefore, we would welcome this latest contribution to the now extensive literature on the subject as a new presentation of a fundamentally important doctrine. But happily there are other reasons, too, to recommend it. In the first place it is unusually complete in the sense that it covers the whole ground, however succinctly, treating of the sources and history of the

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doctrine, the meaning of each of the terms, in themselves and in their context, the implications of the doctrine in respect of both the external and internal life of the Church, and especially in respect of the Sacraments of organic structure and growth, the Priesthood of Christ and the Priesthood and Pastorate of the Church. The whole question, with its problems and their resolutions, is presented in a scholarly fashion; the documentation is very full and suggests wide reading as well as the use of the most authoritative sources. It is, indeed, more a manual for students than a book of spiritual reading. The *loci* in the New Testament are exhaustively indicated and the community of this teaching, especially as between St. Paul and St. John, adequately established. The long chapter devoted to an exposition of the doctrine as it appears in the Fathers of the Church up to Augustine, with summary quotations (in respect of which the author expresses some indebtedness to the work of Emile Mersch, S.J., *Le Corps mystique du Christ*, reviewed in the February issue of BLACKFRIARS), provides a valuable bird's-eye view of its consistency and continuance in the early centuries of the Church. Not, of course, that it ceased to be taught then; it should give a new angle of vision upon the true profundity and unity of the *Summa* of St. Thomas to realize that, in the words of Abbé Anger quoted by the author, "the doctrine of the mystical body of Christ sums up and unifies everything in the work of the Angelic Doctor." It is to be regretted, however, that Father Gruden did not deal more fully with the causes and results of the apparent eclipse of this doctrine which coincided with the decline of Scholasticism and was followed by the Protestant revolt; just as it is a pity that he did not expound the implication of its revival after the Vatican Council; all this important history is covered very briefly in the Introduction. We hope that in a future edition he will expand his thesis into two volumes, the one historical and the other doctrinal.

In dealing with the significance of the phrase "mystical body of Christ," the author touches upon an important point not yet sufficiently dealt with or appreciated, namely the sacramental implication of the word "mystical" in this context. The adjective seems first to have been added thus by Alexander of Hales in the early thirteenth century, at a time when the two words *mysterium* and *sacramentum* were interchangeable (though the latter word already also had its proper technical meaning). "Mystical" must not be interpreted in the modern sense, therefore, but in the ancient sense of "supernatural and invisible, yet signified by some outward sign." The author does treat also, in a brief section, of *The Church as a Sacrament*, but we feel that this important and basic notion has not even here been sufficiently underlined. Yet it is *de facto* the underlying thesis of the whole of this valuable book.

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Another key point that we would gladly have seen more fully developed is that of the relation between the "historical" and the "mystical" Christ. If the Church has a mystical or sacramental implication, as we have said, this is only because the "historical" Christ, even precisely as historical, has also a "mystical" or sacramental significance. The historical Christ, in His life, activities and death, signified all mankind (even as Adam in his sin signified all mankind). And what was signified was also effected, so that in Him all mankind made reparation and lived anew the divine life of union with God (even as in Adam all mankind sinned and died to that divine life). Therefore is the historical Christ the head and all men sharing His incarnate life by Baptism are members of the body, which is the Church, and head and body, with its members, are the mystical Christ.

We are bound to recognize that in these days the apologetic of the Church must assume a new form, or better that it must re-assume its older form. The polemics and controversies which the Reformers called forth in the sixteenth century have coloured Catholic apologetics down to our own times. But now it is imperative that a new and more fundamentally doctrinal approach be adopted; and for this reason we gladly welcome Father Gruden's work as typical of what is needed.

HILARY J. CARPENTER, O.P.

LA DIALECTIQUE DE LA DUREE. By Gaston Bachelard. (Boivin; 15 frs.)

This book is described by its author as a propaedeutic to a philosophy of repose and as an essay in discontinuous Bergsonism. As he explains, he can agree with Bergson on almost everything except continuity.

This being the case, the emphasis throughout is on the discontinuity of the real, its negative aspect, rather than on the fulness on which Bergson insists. For Bergson negations refer to judgments and not to subjects, and are therefore of secondary importance; M. Bachelard makes them primary, refusing to deny reality to the emptiness we experience along with fulnesses. The durations we experience are made up of events and intervals, not of events only. For Bergson reality is continuous, discontinuity and negation belong to the mind looking backwards along the real; for M. Bachelard continuity is problematic, a practical problem, something to be achieved and maintained, never found. Continuity only appears in experience that has not yet been analyzed, and it is by delicate analyses, psychological and phenomenological, that he tries to establish the reality of the discontinuities in all duration.

What can be thought can be taught, and M. Bachelard under-